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Letter from Mary A. Livermore, Melrose, Massachusetts, to Anne Whitney, Boston, Massachusetts, 1885 July 16

Mary A. Livermore

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BC
Miss Whitney,
92 Mt. Vernon St.,
Boston.



funeral would be strictly private." I knew how great a change had come to the Preston household, and its management, since the return of Annie and Emma Preston from Europe. Dora was formerly in charge of the house - but Emma has ruled since she came home. And so I did not go to Weymouth, although I greatly desired to do so. Had Dora been in charge, as formerly, I should not have hesitated.

Mrs. Hunt writes me that Mrs. Preston's friends and acquaintances ^{in Weymouth} of many years' standing, are much grieved that they were not allowed to manifest their respect for Mrs. Chapman by attending her funeral. Only three Weymouth people were invited to be present, except the Covinggs, who are rel-

#8
your beautiful crea-
tion completed -
your work done for
the present. The air
and the mountains
will give you rest
and strength, and
new inspiration.
Remember me
to Miss Manning
and believe me
ever, truly,
Mrs. D. L. Moore
161
1885
Although since
early Monday morning, my brain
has repeated automatically, every
few moments, the telegram inform-
ing me of Mrs. Chapman's death,
I find it impossible to believe
it. A letter from her written
only a few days ago lies on my
desk, with its queries unanswer-
ed. So also does my unfinish-
ed letter in reply, which would
have been mailed to her on
Monday morning, had not call-
ers prevented my completing it
Sunday evening. It seems incred-

ible that the brightness and clearness of intellect, the uprightness and honor of character, the loyalty in friendship, and serenity in misfortune, so conspicuous in our friend, are eclipsed forever.

Whether it is the result of my early training, a survival of my early belief, or because of an occult, spiritual, far-reaching vision that I cannot explain, I cannot tell. But all the while I am sure our friend is not dead. And my thoughts travel after her, on the trackless way she has sped, and I wonder if somewhere she has not encountered the children and husbands

loved Mrs. Chapman were not present - or allowed to be if they desired.

But these arrangements may have been made by Mrs. Chapman herself, in anticipation of death. The sisters, Annie and Emma, have lived very much abroad, and probably knew very little concerning Mrs. Chapman's friends. The shock of her sudden death was painfully felt by them, and the most private obsequies undoubtedly best suited their feelings.

For does it matter very greatly? We are still in bondage to the customs of years ago, when the ado made over one when dead was regarded as the measure of one's worth. When one has escaped from a diseased or worn-out body, what matters it concerning the abandoned garment of flesh? Cremation suits me better than burial. I hope you are soon going to Shelburne -

atives. An Orthodox clergyman, who did not know Mrs. Chapman read from the Bible and made a prayer - all very brief and hurried. Mr. May wished to speak, and signified his desire to Dora. But she told him the arrangements for the occasion were made, and great brevity was desired - and so he kept silence.

Mrs. Hunt contrasts these arrangements with those made by Mrs. Chapman, ~~on the~~ when her brother was buried, and the sisters were abroad. Then Weymouth friends of the family who had remembered the brother in little gifts, to cheer him in his long illness - and friends of the family were present at the funeral. And she expresses the regret in which I sympathize, that those who knew, and admired, and

who preceded her - if she has not found Garrison and Harriet Martineau, and other grand souls, who had so much of God in them, that they must live, if there be a living God of whom they were the outcome.

I speculate, and doubt, and disbelieve, until some one of unusual nobility drops out into the silence and darkness. And then I contradict myself, and grow temporarily clear, and strong, and believing, and am sure that death is but a circumstance in a life that is unbroken.

When Mrs. Hunt of Weymouth, my old-time friend, telegraphed me Monday morning of Mrs. Chapman's death, she added that "the